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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/046,581	01/16/2002	Victoria M. Bellotti	D/A1490	4950
7590	03/10/2005			
			EXAMINER	
			PWU, JEFFREY C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2143	
DATE MAILED: 03/10/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/046,581	BELLOTTI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jeffrey Pwu	2143	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-50 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-50 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/16/2002.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Reed et al. (US 5,862,325).

Reed et al. disclose claims:

1. A system and method for managing and tracking information items within an message-based system on a user system, the message-based system having a viewer, the method comprising the operations of:

(a) generating a thrask (thread(s) & task(s)), the thrask including at least one information item having a set of metadata (1401↔1424; fig.29A);

(b) sorting a new information item into the thrask in accordance with at least one criterion (22; via e-mail); and

(c) displaying the thrask and at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in the thrask in the viewer (22; “consumer program operation”; “consumer computer”).

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the operation of:

(d) updating at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in the thrask (col.75, line 63-col.76, line 63; col.105, line 53-col.106, line60) .

3. The method of claim 1 wherein operations (a), (b) and (c) are embedded in the message-based system (1115, 1125; col.42, line 22-col.44, line 40).
4. The method of claim 1 wherein an information item included in the thrask is either a message or a document (col.8, line 51-col.9, line 49).
5. The method of claim 4 wherein the document originates from one of the following: a document attached to a message, a document residing on the user system or a document accessible by the user system (col.34, line 50-col.35, line 25).
6. The method of claim 1 wherein metadata of an information item included in the thrask are task-related information (method steps of figs. 15-17).
7. The method of claim 6 wherein the metadata of the information item include at least one of a deadline and a reminder (col.7, line 64-col.8, line 2).
8. The method of claim 7 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operation of displaying a notification when a specified date for a reminder or a deadline arrives (col.42, line 39-col.44, line 14).
9. The method of claim 7 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operation of displaying a dialog box when a specified date for a reminder or a deadline arrives, the dialog box allowing a user to select one of a plurality of options (col.52, lines 14-53).
10. The method of claim 7 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operation of displaying an indicator associated with the thrask for a nearest specified date for a deadline or a reminder associated with one of the information items in the thrask (col.84, line 60-col.85, line 4).
11. The method of claim 10 wherein the indicator changes in appearance as the nearest specified date gets closer (140; “transfer communication rules”; “newflag, holdflag, ... etc”).

12. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (a) is performed in response to a user action performed on an information item (col.93, line64-col.94, 34).
13. The method of claim 12 wherein the viewer includes a thrask-viewing pane displaying a set of thrasks and wherein the user action comprises the action of manually dragging an information item into the thrask-viewing pane (col.42, line 39-col.44, line 14).
14. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (a) comprises the operation of automatically generating a thrask when a predetermined criterion is satisfied (col.82, line 38-col.84, line 67).
15. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (b) comprises the operation of automatically sorting a new message into the thrask when the new message is a response to a message already included in the thrask (110 of fig.3; 201 of fig.4).
16. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (b) is performed in response to a user action, the user action including the action of manually dragging an information item into a visual display of the thrask (“For example, a receipt method can produce and transmit an acknowledgment registration message object, described above, with no consumer intervention. Data exchange methods that produce message objects can also obtain manual data input from the consumer or provider”).
17. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (b) comprises the operation of providing to the user a suggestion of which thrask to put the new information item into, when there is more than one thrasks (see “Forwarding and Changing Control”; col.82, line 37).
18. The method of claim 1 wherein the viewer comprises a thrask-viewing pane and an item list pane, and wherein operation (c) comprises the operation of displaying a set of thrasks in the thrask-viewing pane and of displaying in the item list pane a set of information items associated with a thrask selected from the set of thrasks (col.42, line 39-col.44, line 14).

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the viewer further comprises a content viewing pane and wherein operation (c) further comprises the operation of displaying in the content viewing pane the content of an information item selected from a set of information items associated with a thrask selected from the set of thrasks (col.65, lines 15-25).
20. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operation of displaying a mark indicating an obligation associated with one of the information items in the thrask, the obligation being user-defined (140; “transfer communication rules”; “newflag, holdflag, … etc”).
21. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operation of displaying a group of marks indicating obligations associated with the thrask, the obligations being user-defined, the marks corresponding to some of the information items included in the thrask (140; “transfer communication rules”; “newflag, holdflag, … etc”).
22. The method of claim 21 wherein, in the display of the group of marks, marks indicating obligations of the user are distinct from marks indicating obligations of correspondents of the user (see “Forwarding and Changing Control”; col.82, line 37).
23. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (c) comprises the operation of displaying, upon user selection of an option, all names that appear in the “From:”, “To:” or “Cc:” lines of an information item that is associated with an obligation (see “Forwarding and Changing Control”; col.82, line 37; 22; “consumer program operation”; “consumer computer”).
24. The method of claim 1 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operations of: deferring a display of the thrask until a user-specified date in response to a user selection of a first deferral option; and deferring a display of an information item included in the thrask until a user-specified date in response to a user selection of a second deferral option (see “Forwarding and Changing Control”; col.82, line 37; 22; “consumer program operation”; “consumer computer”).

25. The method of claim 24 wherein operation (c) further comprises the operations of: displaying a deferred thrask in response to a user request to see the deferred thrask; and displaying a deferred information item in a thrask in response to a user request to see the deferred information item (claims 12, 13, 89, 90).

Claims 26-50 are similarly rejected as in claims 1-26.

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey Pwu whose telephone number is 571 272-6798. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached on 571 272-3923. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



March 1, 2005

JEFFREY PWU
PRIMARY EXAMINER